



United States Department of the Interior

NATIONAL PARK SERVICE

Apostle Islands National Lakeshore
415 Washington Avenue
Bayfield, Wisconsin 54814-9599

IN REPLY REFER TO:

N1615
APIS

June 20, 2008

Dear Applicants:

We appreciate your inquiry regarding deer hunting opportunities in the Apostle Islands National Lakeshore (APIS). For the past 23 years the lakeshore has provided deer hunters with a unique but limited hunting experience with muzzleloader firearms on Basswood and Oak Islands.

You will be pleased to hear that new rule changes go into effect in 2008 that expand the muzzleloader season and add a new archery season. The lakeshore staff has been working closely with the Wisconsin Department of Natural Resources (WDNR) over the past two years to expand deer hunting opportunities within the lakeshore, Deer Management Unit #79. The text of the final rule is available at: http://www.legis.state.wi.us/cr_final/07-015.pdf

The new rule changes in 2008 include:

- Deer Management Unit #79 carcass tags,
Wisconsin DNR Offices will issue up to 2 tags per hunter per day free under earn-a-buck rules.
- Deer hunting is expanded to all islands within the National Lakeshore.
- A "New" archery season.
- Hunters retain the option to use their regular season deer tag.
- Hunters **must obtain a HUNTER ACCESS PERMIT** (see attachment) to hunt within the Apostle Islands National Lakeshore, Deer Management Unit (DMU) #79.

SPECIAL UNIT 79 CARCASS TAGS

The rule changes in 2008 have expanded hunting activities to include all islands within the national lakeshore. Wisconsin DNR Service offices will issue Special Unit 79 deer carcass tags "free-of-charge" under "earn-a-buck" rules at a rate of 2 tags per day per hunter.

This means the hunter must harvest an antlerless deer first in the current year before harvesting a buck. Each tag may be used to harvest any of the following:

- An antlerless deer,
- A buck deer if the hunter possesses an antlerless deer registration verification earned in Unit 79 in the current year,
- A buck deer if the hunter possesses an antlerless deer that has been legally harvested in Unit 79 and is tagged prior to the harvest of the buck deer and the antlerless deer accompanies the buck deer until each is registered.

The hunter has the option to use their Wisconsin State Deer/Firearms, Sportsman, or Conservation Patron license to harvest a buck first. However, the hunter will not have a buck tag to use during the regular archery or gun seasons.

THE MUZZLE LOADER HUNT

The muzzle loader hunt is conducted during the month of October. It is limited to muzzle loading weapons only, and all State of Wisconsin regulations pertaining to these weapons will apply. Do not bring any other type of firearms to the island(s).

THE ARCHERY HUNT

Starting in 2008, the Apostle Islands National Lakeshore will offer an Archery Hunt during the following periods,

- September 13 - September 30
- November 1 - December 31.

SAND AND YORK ISLANDS

It is anticipated that Sand and York Islands will be closed to all hunting activity following the October muzzleloader hunt.

HUNTING IN GENERAL

Public hunting does overlap the period of time when tribal hunters are also permitted to hunt deer in the exercise of treaty rights.

The deer population on the Apostle Islands is transient in that the deer move between the islands and mainland by traveling over-the-ice in the winter or by swimming in the summer. The population fluctuates, but a large density of deer will not be present on most islands. Populations on islands with deer may vary from two to four deer per square mile in some years, to ten to twelve in others. In recent years, higher densities have been present on Sand and York Islands.

The primary reason for these special seasons is to provide a unique opportunity to camp and hunt under primitive conditions in an outstanding backcountry area. It often is not a "target rich" environment compared to other areas of the state. The success of your participation in this hunt might best be measured by the challenges of the experience.

In general, State of Wisconsin deer hunting laws apply during the hunt. You need to obtain a pamphlet containing the state regulations when you purchase your state license.

Please pay particular attention to the following sections:

- General hunting restrictions
- Unit 79 restrictions
- Muzzleloader firearms restrictions
- Arms transportation
- Blaze orange requirements
- Deer carcass tags, applicable to DMU-#79

Additionally, National Park Service (NPS) regulations also apply, most specifically:

1. The feeding/baiting of any wildlife is prohibited.
2. Hunting within 100 yards of any building, dock, designated campsite, or park facility is prohibited. Possession of a loaded weapon in these areas will be interpreted as hunting in a closed area.
3. Portable tree stands are permitted, but no tree may be destroyed or injured by their use. The cutting of vegetation to provide shooting lanes is also prohibited.
4. Deer that are harvested by hunters must be secured from all wildlife contact. Acceptable storage includes bear proof lockers or suspending deer carcasses at a sufficient height between trees at least 100 yards from any designated camping area. If deer carcasses are stored in bear proof lockers they must be wrapped or enclosed in plastic to avoid sanitation and public health concerns.

Park Rangers patrol the islands to provide assistance, enforce federal and state laws and regulations, as well as to register any deer that are taken.

ACCOMMODATIONS

There is no lodging or developed facilities on the islands. Camping is permitted in accordance with NPS Regulations.

For a list of accommodations in the Bayfield area, please contact the Bayfield Chamber of Commerce, Box 138, Bayfield, Wisconsin, 54814. The phone number is 715-779-3335 or 800-447-4094.

CAMPING IN THE PARK

CAMPING RESERVATIONS/PERMITS ARE REQUIRED for all camping in Apostle Islands National Lakeshore. A camping fee is charged for each day of the permit. Reservations can be made by calling 715-779-3397 x 399.

Potable water is not available on most islands. Be prepared to take an adequate supply along or to filter or boil lake water before use.

Night temperatures may drop below freezing. Frost and the first snowfall are typical occurrences at the end October. October's average high temperature is 47.5 degrees Fahrenheit, and the low is around 40 degrees Fahrenheit.

TRANSPORTATION TO/FROM THE ISLAND(S)

If you wish to take your own boat to the island(s), there are public launches at Bayfield, Red Cliff three miles north of Bayfield, and Little Sand Bay (close to Sand Island).

Lake Superior can be very cold, rough and unforgiving. We do not recommend the use of small, open boats for crossing to the islands. Also, the docks on the islands can be very exposed under certain weather conditions.

If you are traveling by private boat, a marine VHF radio is strongly recommended. The U.S. Coast Guard and Park Rangers on patrol monitor Channel 16, which is a hailing and distress frequency. We strongly recommend that you consider utilizing one of several companies that provide Water Taxi Services in the area. For a list of water taxi services go to the park website at:

<http://www.nps.gov/apis/parkmgmt/upload/Trips-tours-services.pdf>

If you choose to utilize a water taxi service make advanced reservations. Regardless of your mode of transportation, bring extra food and provisions; and be prepared to have the weather and Lake Superior change your travel plans.

APPLYING FOR THIS HUNT

You can apply for a hunting access permit at any time. Permits will be issued through the last week of the respective hunting season.

These special hunting opportunities require some planning on the part of the hunters, but it is a unique and challenging experience that has been widely enjoyed by former participants.

Contact Information

If you have questions about the public hunt please contact Apostle Islands National Lakeshore, 415 Washington Avenue, Bayfield, Wisconsin, 54814. 715-779-3398 Extension 201. We wish you success.

Sincerely,

Greg Zeman
Chief of Protection